

23 February 2026

Cllr. V. de Beer-Mthombeni
Executive Mayor
Ngwathe Local Municipality
Liebenbergtrek
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Dear Councillor de Beer-Mthombeni

RESPONSE TO YOUR MEDIA RELEASE TO NGWATHE RESIDENTS

AfriForum represents the interests of its members and the broader community within the Ngwathe Local Municipality. I write on behalf of the AfriForum community in response to the media release issued following the recent High Court judgment.

In your media release, you state that the municipality remains “stable and functional” and that “service delivery proceeds without interruption.” However, reports received from residents over the past weekend indicate more than 60 water interruptions in Parys alone, some lasting several days, as well as more than 300 electricity outages. In some instances, residents experienced multiple power failures within a single day. There have also been reports of low voltage affecting electrical appliances.

In addition, ongoing sewer spillages into river systems remain a serious concern. These matters relate directly to the municipality’s constitutional obligation to provide basic services. Against this background, it is difficult to reconcile the lived experience of residents with the assertion that the municipality is not in a state of crisis.

You further state that the municipality has a constitutional mandate to prioritise the wellbeing of residents. Many residents have, however, been without reliable water supply for extended periods, in some cases for years. Reports have also been received that water delivered by tankers is not always consistently available, and that residents have in certain instances been asked to pay for water. These allegations require urgent clarification and intervention.

Your media release indicates that the municipality will study the judgment and determine the next steps. The Court has already handed down its decision, and it is important that the municipality acts in accordance with that order. Prolonged litigation, particularly where funded by municipal resources amid ongoing service delivery failures, raises serious concerns among residents.

It is further concerning that the municipality now appears to intend lodging another appeal, reportedly without a properly convened council meeting to mandate such a decision. Decisions of this nature require full compliance with governance processes and applicable legislation.

June 2024

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Dr D.J. Hermann, Mr W.G. Human, Mr C.M. Kriel and Dr R. Pretorius. • **Company Secretary:** Mr W.A. Vogel.
Registration number: 2005/042861/08 • **NGO number:** 054 - 590

You also refer to cooperation with stakeholders. AfriForum has on numerous occasions offered assistance and cooperation in the interest of residents, but these offers have not been taken up. Meaningful engagement with civil society and other stakeholders remains essential to restoring stability and service delivery in Ngwathe.

AfriForum remains committed to constructive engagement in the interest of the community and calls on the municipality to prioritise lawful governance, transparency and the urgent restoration of basic services.

Kind regards

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